

NEW-ENGLANDS
Middle
True Interest;
NOT TO LIE:

OR,

A Treatise declaring from the Word of Truth the
Terms on which we stand, and the Tenure by which
we hold our hitherto-continued

Precious and Pleasant Things.

S H E W I N G

What the blessed God expecteth from his People, and what
they may rationally look for from him.

Delivered in a SERMON Preached in *Boston*
in *New-England*, April 29. 1668. being the

DAY of ELECTION
T H E R E.

By Mr. *W. Stoughton*, Preacher of the Gospel in *Dorchester*.

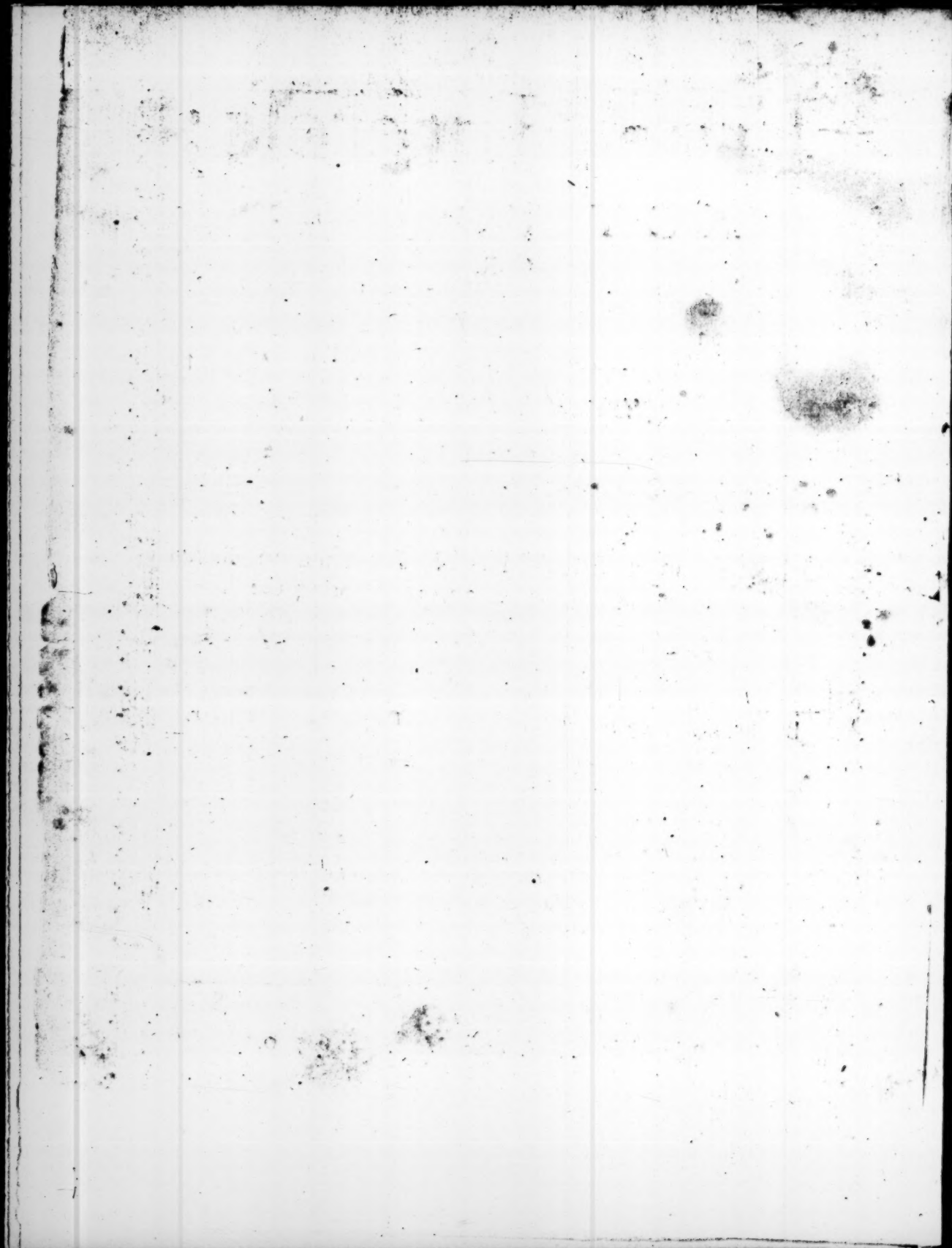
Iai. 51. 7, 8. Hearken to me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart
is my law, fear ye not the reproach of men; neither be afraid of their
revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm
shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my
salvation from generation to generation.

Haggai 2. 4. Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord, and be strong, O
Joshua the High Priest, and be strong all ye people of the land, saith the
Lord, and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of Hosts.

Psalm 81. 13, &c. O that my people had hearkened to me, and Israel had walked
in my ways—their time should have endured for ever, &c.

C A M B R I D G E :

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An Advertisement to the Reader.

Christian Reader,

Concerning this Sermon which is now offering it self to thy hand and heart, I must say what I am fully persuaded of, viz. That it containeth words of uprightness and truth, and such as to many Auditors present at the publick Preaching of it, were very acceptable: When they came warm from the mouth and spirit of the speaker, I doubt not, but they carried with them sweetness through the ear to the heart of each rightly prepared hearer. To receive with affliction, is good, but not all the entertainment we owe to messages, sent by the God of Salvation to his Covenant-people. Words of wisdom must be as Nails fastened, Eccl. 12. 11. the word of Christ must abide, Joh 15. 7. and dwell richly in us, Col. 3. 16. The helping forward of so good a work, hath occasioned a Person of worth, eminently affected to thine, and this poor Countries best good, in subserviency to the glory of the blessed God of Truth, to adventure the publishing, of what the pious Author was well-nigh invincibly unwilling should ever have come forth. In hearing, the attentive minde must hold pace with the speaker, following him through all particulars from the beginning to the end of his Message: but in reading we have this advantage, that we may stay and dwell upon what we have first a minde to, and by serious thoughts and humble prayer, improve it to our good, without depriving our selves of opportunity of doing the like, with any other part of it afterward. Thou hast now a help to reminde thee of many useful (but possibly forgotten) passages. God, whose Providence hath brought this to thy hands, expecteth a suitable improvement: an awakening, humbling quickening, is the best use we can make of it. Visible benefit and fruit, is like to prove the best expedient to ease the spirit of the too-unwilling Author, of that trouble which an excess of modesty may have made him capable of, for bring by a friendly violence thus thrust out upon the Stage. Some persons, not born, but cut out of their Mothers wombs, have proved considerable for AElion, if Histories may be credited. That Heavens blessing may make this seasonable Sermon so, is the hope and shall be the humble prayer of him who is unfeignedly

Thine in the Lord Jesus,

J. S.

New Englands True Interest; NOT TO LIE.

Isaiah 63. 8.

For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie : so he was their Saviour.

IN this Chapter (to give you onely a very short view of the Context) you may take notice of these three parts.

1. An Interlocution or Dialogue between Christ and his Church, contained in the first six Verses. The unexpected appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, in his glorious works of Vengeance upon his peoples enemies, and of Salvation to his Church, it draws forth the Churches earnest Enquiries; and these her Enquiries they draw forth Christs distinct Answers, even as it is promised *Jer. 33. 3. Call upon me and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things which thou knewest not.* Christ loves to be questioned with concerning his great works of Providence, because he desires to be known unto his people in them; and to acquaint them with the great designs he hath in hand, as here he is graciously pleased to do.

2. An Acknowledgement of Praise from the Church, in the recounting, and calling to minde of eminent passages of former mercy and kindness extended to her, from *ver. 7. to ver. 15.*

3. The Churches earnest Prayer and pleading with God hereupon, from *v. 15. to the end: Look down from heaven, &c.*

The Verse read, comes under the second of these Heads. Christ having declared, not only his *Person*, but also his present design and work to be the wonderful destruction of his and his peoples enemies, and the salvation of his Redeemed ones; The Church is presently striking upon the same string of Mercy, and that her faith and hope might be further confirmed, and her heart enlarged, she presently ecchoes unto Christ, by telling over the former stories of his loving kindness, *ver. 7. I will men-*

tion the loving kindnesse of the Lord, &c. Now (as one aptly notes upon the place) As good Historians do not only relate meer naked matters of fact, but the persons also, and considerations moving so or so, with the effects and resultances, so the Church, surveying here the loving kindnesse of the Lord from an ancient date, suggests in the words read, the *Considerations* upon which the Lord proceeded to be the Saviour of this people; *For he said, &c.*

The words of the Text may be thus divided. We have in them

1. The Lords just expectations of his people, and that promise which he makes to himself of great things from them. *He said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie.*

2. The influence of these things upon the Lords Saviourly undertakings with and for his people: *So he was their Saviour.*

Or a little more largely the words hold forth to us

1. The best Relation wherein any people can stand, and that is to be the Lords people.

2. That eminent Qualification which suits with such a Relation; *To be children that will not lie.*

3. The Lords solemn Assertion and Consideration of such a Relation and Qualification in the people spoken of; *For he said, Surely they are my people, &c.* He affirms such a Relation, and he solemnly expects and promiseth to himself such an answerable Qualification.

4. The Lords Engagements and Actings as a Saviour towards this his people hereupon, or as influenced by these things. Having such an expectation, and conceiving such hopes of this people, as to promise to himself such things from them, The Lord resolves to undertake, and doth actually engage himself, in the whole work of their Salvation: *Proving them and trying them under a singular dispensation, and long continued series of mercy, which began with their Redemption out of Egypt, and so was carried on through the Wilderness unto Canaan, as in the Verses following the Text is more fully declared.*

God is here spoken of after the manner of men, as giving to himself the grounds and reasons of his own great undertaking. And therefore the expressions of the Text do no whit impeach the fore-knowledge of God, whereby he knew from the beginning what the rebellions and backslidings of this people would

be, even as in v. 30. we find it; but the Lord speaks as one of us, judging of matters, and taking up his hopes, according to the visible and apparent just grounds and reasons of things, even as a prudent and wise man would in the like case have done: for who is there that would not have promised to himself great things from a people so engaged and circumstanced, in case so great mercy and salvation were shewn to them? Now that which the Lord promiseth to himself and expects from them, is, That they would prove *Children that would not lie*.

To lie, in the sense of the Text, takes in deeds as well as words, yea matters of fact more especially. The Spirit of God means hereby all *Unsoundness, Perfidiousness, Prevarication with the Lord*, whereby we go contrary to our *Engagements*, and prove unfaithful to him. The word is translated in other places to deal falsely, as Gen. 21. 23. and to fail, Psal. 89. 33. It is to be referred unto the matters of the *Lords Covenant* with his people. God expects and promiseth to himself that in these things his people will *keep touch with him, and not shrink*. Thus the Church asserts her uprightness, by removing the Lie far from herself, Psal. 44. 17. All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, nor dealt falsely in thy Covenant: the word is the same with that in the Text; We have not lied unto thee in thy Covenant. This is the plain meaning of the words: *They will be perfect, upright, faithful to me and with me in all the covenants of my Covenant with them; I have this good persuasion of them, and I will try them with mercy and salvation, to see how they will answer and make good my expectations of them.*

From this 8th Verse, as relating unto the next foregoing, we may briefly take up this Note:

Observ.

The fountain and fulness of all the Blessings of the people of God, it is contained in this, to have the Lord Jehovah to be their Saviour. All the loving kindnesses, all the Lords bestowings, all his great goodness and mercies mentioned in ver. 7. they are summ'd up in, and made to flow from this one thing in ver. 8. He became their Saviour.

Reas. 1. From the Comprehensiveness of Salvation. It contains in it all the good and blessedness of sinners, whether temporal or spiritual, and that in a way of glorious Redemption from, conquest and triumph over, and destruction of what
soever

forever can be found in opposition, whether by way of *demerit*, or as an *adverse working power*. Of Salvation may every poor believing Soul; or People say, and that in their worst and most distressed estate, *All my well-springs are in thee.*

Reas. 2. From the infinite Sufficiency of the Undertaker, when the Lord Jehovah is the Saviour, or undertakes to become the Saviour. *Isa. 43, 11.*

Use 1. Learn watchmen, that we are to take notice of *divine Salvation*, or of God as a *Saviour*, in all that which the Lord hath graciously bestowed upon us his poor people in this Wilderness. Our Churches, our Ordinances, our Liberties and Privileges, our Mercies this day, and unto this day from the beginning, they are streams issuing from this one Fountain-head, and lines meeting in this Centre, *Divine Salvation*. We have enjoyed them, and do yet enjoy them in a way of Salvation. Our Liberties and Privileges they are *Redeemed Ransomed Mercies*, malign them who will. The Price, and Power, and Intercession of a *Mediator*, and of many precious *Saints*, have given and continued them unto us. Many a time have the *Archers shot at them*, Sins and Enemies, Satan and his Instruments have stood in opposition; but the *Salvation* of God hath prevailed, and doth yet prevail: so that we may make our entrance this day with that triumph of holy *Mary*, *Luke 1. 46, 47.* *Our souls do magnify the Lord, and our spirits do rejoice in God our Saviour.*

Use 2. Then let us continue to draw all our waters out of *Isaiah 12 3.* these wells of *Salvation*, the Redeeming grace, and power, and pity, and faithfulness of the Lord our God, as a Saviour to us and with us. They are men of use indeed, that have good buckets of Faith and Prayer to let down here. Of such precious ones let the *Governours of Judah* say in their hearts, *that these* *Zech. 12 5.* *shall be their strength, in the Lord of Hosts their God.* You that can draw hence, spare no labour nor pains. The Well indeed is deep, but the Spirit of God is with you; and these waters drawn out by a lively constant acting of Faith, will abundantly recompence all our labour. By these shall the *inheri- tance of the Lord be refreshed when it is weary*; yea, in due time, they shall flow forth to be unto us a place of broad Rivers and streams, where- in shall go no galley with oars, nor gallant ship shall pass thereby, even waters of plenty and security to the Lords people. *Isa. 33, 21.*

But :

But there are two other Observations from the words which I mainly intend; unto which let me speak severally in the Doctrinal part of them, and so joyn them both together in the Application.

I. Observ.

There is a time and season wherein the Lord tries and proves a people with mercies, or with salvation, under his just and righteous Expectations of them, and the promises which he hath made unto himself concerning them.

This is a speaking of God after the manner of men; and in this way we utter matter of truth concerning him; we speak of him things that are right; though in a way of imperfection as to our manner. As God is said sometimes to will a thing, but not according to his Omnipotency, for then it should be most certainly effected: so he is said also to expect and look for some things, and to make a promise of them to himself, but not according to his infinite unerring Prescience. Thus the Lord saith that he looked for grapes from his vineyard, Isa. 5. 2, 4. and ver. 7. He looked for judgement, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry. So Zeph. 3. 7. I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction: and in that Parable, Matth. 21. 37. They will reverence my son.

In this Doctrine there are three things to be spoken to.

First, The grounds and foundations of these Expectations of God, upon which, or according unto which, he raiseth his hopes and confidences concerning any people, so as to say of them, Surely they will be thus, or do thus, as I would have them to be or do. Now here there are these five particulars, briefly as the grounds of the Lords Expectations.

1. The special Relation of a people unto God; or that Covenant-relation whereinto the Lord brings a people that they may be His; Surely they are My people, and then it follows, Children that will not lie. The Lord founds his whole Law, in the giving of it to Israel, upon a Preface of Interest in them, Exod. 20. 2. I am the Lord thy God. A Parent expects more from a Child then from any other, because of the Relation. Jer. 2. 14. if Israel had been no more then a servant or a home-born slave, the Lord had not expected so great things from him; but now being a son, yea a first-born, Exod. 4. 22. this makes the Judgements of God executed upon him for rebellions and backslidings

slidings to be, though more *strange and astonishing*, yet most *just and righteous*.

2. *The Extraction of a people*, or their descent from such and such Parents and Progenitors; when they do not onely stand in relation to God, but are born and grow up into Covenant with him, as the seed and posterity of the Lords faithful ones. This is implied in that expression of *Children* in the Text; it notes not onely their Relation unto God as a Father, but unto *pious and religious Parents*, the Lords faithful Covenanting Servants. Religious Parentage and Descent is of great moment with the Lord; hence he calls and names his people so often in Scripture from their pious Ancestors. Thus the whole *Race* is called *Jacob* and *Israel*, the *seed of Jacob* and of *Israel*, Psal. 22. 23. Isa. 45. 19. the *Posterity of Abraham*, &c. Covenanting holy Parents, they are a *holy Root* unto their Seed, and the Lord may well expect that the *Branches* should be answerable unto the Root. Hence Rom. 11. 16. the Lord solemnly calls upon his people to *look to the Rock whence they were hewn*, and to the *hole of the Pit whence they were digged*; to look unto *Abraham their father*, and to *Sarah that bare them*, Isa. 51. 1, 2.

3. *The solemn actual Restipulations of a people unto God*, whereby they do more explicitly binde themselves, and come under voluntary deliberate Engagements unto God. When God hath the Vows and Promises, the Hands and Seals, the solemn Covenant-Deeds of a people, now he may well expect that from such a time they will never *fail him* more, but abide *faithful and constant*. Thus it was with Israel, Jer. 2. 20. Deut. 26. 17. Josh. 24. 21, 22.

4. *The Advantages and Priviledges of a people*. A people in Covenant, are a people of many Advantages, and the Lord builds his Expectations upon these, Rom. 3. 1, 2. & 9. 4, 5. God looked for grapes from his vineyard, Isa. 5. because he had *fenced it*, and *gathered out the stones*, and *built a tower in the midst thereof*, and *made a wine-press therein*, ver. 1, 2. When the rain cometh oft upon the ground, the Husbandman expecteth *meet fruit*; and good reason, because of this advantage: *fruitful seasons* afforded, make us to expect a *plentiful Harvest*. If God be not wanting in Ordinances, in sending Messengers one after another, in setting up Lights in the Candlesticks, in holding forth

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the Rule unto a people, and discovering the Pattern of his house to them, &c. he will certainly expect and require singular things from them: *for unto whom much is given, from them shall much be required*, Luk. 12. 48. Psal. 147. 19, 20. Mat. 11. 20, 21, &c.

5. *The primitive Constitution of a people, and their first wayes of walking with God according unto such a Constitution.* When God made man at first, he made him upright; when God doth in a more then ordinary way of Providence form a people, and settle them to be a people to himself, there is ever that which is eminent in the primitive frame of things amongst them, which God expects that they should keep to, and never make defection from. Thus God speaks of his Vineyard, Isa. 5. 2. it was planted with the choicest vine. So Jer. 2. 21. *Yet I planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed.* Thus also God speaks of Judges as at the first, and Counsellors as at the beginning, Isa. 1. 26. David had his first wayes; 2 Chron. 17. 3. and so Churches have their first wayes; when they newly come out of the forming hand of God: Now the Lord expresseth not onely great disappointment, when these first wayes are neglected, or quite altered and cast off, as Jer. 2. 21. *How then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?* but great displeasure also, and threats of punishment, Rev. 2. 4, 5. hence are those cutting Interrogatories, Gal. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Secondly, A second thing in this Doctrine is, *The nature and tenour of this dispensation of God, to try and prove a people with Mercies and Salvation under his just Expectations of them, and promises concerning them.* This we may take in three particulars.

1. *When the Lord enters into Covenant with any people, this Covenant of his is a Covenant with Conditions.* *Fœdus est promissio sub certâ conditione.* Hence there are the Laws, as well as the Promises of the Covenant. As the Lord obligeth himself to us, so he requires something from us, and thus the Commandments & Statutes of God are frequently called his Covenant, Exod. 34. 28. Deut. 4. 13. The Lord doth not binde himself but upon terms to any people. In the purely spiritual Covenant, establish'd with Believers onely, as there are the Laws of it, 1 Cor 9. 21. so there is a sufficiency of grace provided, and absolutely engaged, that there may be a performance and obedience unto the end, and so

so that Covenant can never be made void or disannulled to any that are ever brought into the bond thereof, *Jer. 31. 31, 32, 33, 34. & 32. 20.* But as to that external political Covenant, which takes in *A Body of People*, here there is no such engagement of grace sufficient, infallibly to be bestowed for the keeping of the same; and therefore it may be and is most frequently broken and made void. God threatens to remove the Candlestick, *Rev. 2. 5.* and often hath he done it. *Israel and Judah* were in the issue cast off, for breaking the Lords Covenant.

2. God never is, nor can he be the first that fails in his Covenant with a people. Their desertion or dereliction never begins with God, but themselves, *Hos. 13. 9.* You know the common and stated Rule in this case. Acts of pure Dominion and Sovereignty they begin with God, & proceed wholly from him, *Rom. 9. 11, 12, 13.* but acts of Justice must have the demerit of the creature to be founded upon; such is Gods forsaking of a people, *Jer. 2. 17. 2 Chron. 15 2.*

3. Hence there is a Probation-time belonging to the Covenant-state of a people. The Lord will make a triall whether they will keep and bestedfast in his Covenant, yea or no. He will not fail on his part, but he will be that unto a people which he hath engaged himself to be by Covenant; He will nourish and cherish, He will instruct and teach, He will save and shine upon a people, and keep the path of a gracious Covenant, without turning aside from the same, and in such a course and way as this he will make a full proof and trial of them. He will afflict in mercy whilest his hopes of them continue; He will bring many special hours of temptation upon them one way or another; He will nourish and keep up his hopes and expectations as long as may be, untill he hath a full proof of them; and now if they fail him, there is a critical season of altering and changing the course and way of his Providences towards them. From such an hour, or day, or year, is such a person or people forsaken of God; Probation-time ceaseth, and blinding, hardning, ruining time comes in the room of it: *Luk. 19. 42. O that thou hadst known! but now they are hid from thine eyes. Jer. 6. 27, 28, 29, 30. Reprobate silver shall men call them, for the Lord hath rejected them.*

Thirdly, The third thing is the Reason, which shall be onely this one. Because in such a way as this the Lord doth wonderfully

glorifie the Wisdome, and sweetnes, and righteousness of his Administration and Government. The Cords of such a dispensation are the cords of a man, Hof. 11. 4. The Lord acts towards us in a futable way, as we are intelligent creatures, made after the image of God, capable of judging and discerning the Reason and Equity of things, and of arguing one thing from another, and choosling and preferring one thing before another. *As to his Elect*, the Lord reacheth their Souls with effectual grace in this way: *As to others*, the Wisdome and Justice and Holiness of God, shine forth in their hardning and preparation beforehand to destruction. This is a way wherein there can be no exception laid against the Lord by any, but he alone shall overcome in judgement. When the Lord shall triumph most in the utter ruine of a gainsaying, backsliding, despising people, yet he shall also retain the name and glory of a gracious and mercifull God, because He often would have gathered Jerusalem, Matth. 23. 37. and there was nothing more to be done to his vineyard which he did not do, Isa. 5. 4.

H. Observ.

The Lords great Expectation of his people, and the promise which he makes to himself concerning them, is principally this, That they will be children that will not lie, and so he becomes their Saviour.

That which the Lord doth chiefly desire and require in and from his people, that he doth chiefly expect and promise to himself: That which he most abhors and abominates, he least of all expects from them that are his. Now Truth is that which the Lord desires, Psal. 51. 6. but the Lie is that which he hates, Prov. 6. 17. & 12. 22. Isa. 30. 8, 9.

Quest. 2. What is it to be children that will not lie?

Ans.

The general meaning of this expression hath been already given. Such as are lying children, they are also styled corrupters, Isa. 1. 4. unstedfast ones, flatterers, whose hearts are not right, who keep not the Lords Covenant, Psal. 78. 10, 36, 37. Treacherous dealers, Hof. 6. 7. A deceitful bow, Turners back, &c. Psal. 78. 57. Hof. 7. 16. By the contrary unto these we may know what it is not to Lie. Thus we reade of faithful children, Tit. 1. 6. the Generation of the just or Righteous, Psal. 14. 5. such whose hearts are not turned back, and whose steps do not decline, Ps. 44. 18.

More particularly there are these six things that the Lord requires

quires from a Covenanting people, that this Lie may not be charged upon them.

1. *Purity of Doctrine and Worship.* Mixtures and corruptions in these are expressly called a *Lie* in Scripture-phrase, *Hos. 11. 12.* *Ephraim compasseth me about with Lies*; i.e. with false Worship. Antichristianism is therefore called a *Lie*, *2 Thess. 2. 11.* because it is a mixture of *false Doctrines*, and *false Worship*. There are the lies of *Errour and Heresie*, and the lies of *Superstition and Idolatry*; the Lord in his *Covenant* engageth his people against both. There is no *Errour* in *Doctrine*, or in *Worship* and *Ordinances*, but it tends some way or other to *alter, pervert, and corrupt the Lords Covenant* with his people, By this we are to judge of the danger of *Errours* and *erroneous practices*, and answerably to watch against the *infection* of them.

2. *Inward heart sincerity, or Covenant-truth within*, *Psa. 51. 6.* *Rom. 2. 29.* *Prov. 3. 1, 3.* This the Lord hath promised, *Deut. 30. 6.* *Jer. 31. 33.* and calls for, *Deut. 10. 16.* *Jer. 4. 4.* and bitterly complains for the want of, *Isa. 29. 13.* Hypocrisie is a Lie, yea a fountain of Lies. A company of *formal custome-born Christians*, what are they but an *heap of Lies* in the sight and esteem of God. Now this inward heart sincerity it consists in *Right principles*, *1 Tim. 1. 5.* *Right aims and ends*, *Mat. 6. 22.* and a *Right dependance or trust*, *Isa. 26. 3, 4.* as a mans trust, dependance and shelter is, so is his uprightness and sincerity. *Such as have lying Refuges are lying children.*

3. *A conversation flowing from and suiting with truth and sincerity within.* That the power and life of *practical godliness* should be entertained into the whole of our course and way before the Lord. To fail in this is to lie loudly, *1 Joh. 2. 4.* & *4. 20.*

4. *A visible and open profession and holding forth of, and witness-bearing to the truths & ways of God before the world*, *Rom. 10. 10.* *David* did not onely hide the word in his heart; but, saith he, *with my lips have I declared all the judgements of thy mouth*, *Psal. 119. 11, 13.* The Lord *Jesus* witnessed a good confession, *1 Tim. 6. 13.* and herein we must also follow him, that we may be true and faithful unto God. The danger in this matter will not excuse us from the duty. There were an hundred forty and four thousand, *Rev. 14. 1.* that had the *Fathers name* written in their foreheads, they did not conceal nor hide themselves. Hence Gods faithful

Rev. 1. 11. 3.

ones during the whole reign of Antichrist are styled the Lords witnesses. They are such as have their *Banner of witness displayed*, notwithstanding all the bloody rage of Antichrist. To deny the name of Christ, or to wave the publick owning of truths and wayes which the Lord Jesus owns and contends for, this is to be Lying children, and dreadful will be the issue, if the word of Christ be true, *Mat. 10. 32, 33. Mar. 8. 38.* Many cases there are in this matter not here to be touched upon, but if we be the Lords, and he have any delight in us, we shall not fail in the main of this duty. The Church of Christ hath ever had this *visibility of a witness* in her confession of the truths of Christ, and opposition unto the lies of Antichrist, *1 Tim. 3. 15.*

5. *Special fidelity answerable unto special trust committed.* As the Lord Jesus is the *one great Steward*, whom the Father hath set up and appointed over all; so there are many *inferiour subservient Stewards* under him. Some are Stewards in *higher*, some in *inferiour* Ranks and capacities. There are diversities of gifts which are dispensed, unto some *eminency of parts and natural abilities*, unto some the *wealth of this world*, unto some a *large and swaying interest in the Many*, unto some *Authority and Office*. Now all these gifts they are *Talents* as well as *Gifts*; Gifts as *freely bestowed and received*, Talents in respect of the *end wherefore they are bestowed*, viz. that they may be improved, and an account given of them. To betray a mans *trust*, or not to improve his *Talent*, is to lie and deal falsely, for of a *Steward it is required that he be faithful*, *1 Cor. 4. 2.* As every one hath received the gift, so we are to minister the same as good stewards of the manifold grace of God, *1 Pet. 4. 10.* All the Lords people are to be faithful in whatsoever trust is committed unto them, and in *special Magistrates and Rulers*, and so also *Ministers* that are Stewards in the House of God, *1 Cor. 4. 1. Luke 12. 42, 43, 44.*

6. *Stedfastness and constancy, perseverance and holding out, and that in a way of fellowship and Communion with the people of God*, *Heb. 10. 23, 24, 25.* Backsliding children are lying children. To begin well, but not to hold out, not to maintain our integrity, purity, fellowship, faithfulness unto the death, this is breach of Covenant, and to belie the Lord and his wayes, *Jer. 2. 5. Gal. 5. 7, 8, 9. Coloss. 2. 6, 7. 2 Pet. 3. 17, 18.*

How

How is it said in the Doctrine, That so the Lord is, or becomes the Saviour of his people? Quest. 2.

1. There is nothing of *Merit* implied in it.

Ans.

2. There is no barre put unto the Lords proceeding sometime with his people upon terms of *Sovereignty and Prerogative*, in the dispensations of his grace and mercy; as *Isa. 57. 17, 18, 19.*

3. It is to be understood of the Lords *ordinary way of dealing with his people*. It would be horrible presumption in us to expect and promise to our selves Salvation in any contrary way; but in this way of fidelity and faithfulness, it would be a sinfull despondency not to hope, and expect it upon terms of free-grace.

Reas. 1. Because our fidelity and uprightness doth now exactly answer the fidelity and uprightness of God in the Covenant. Our truth doth fitly answer Gods truth and Covenant-All-sufficiency, *Gen. 17. 1.*

Reas. 2. Because when the Lords people prove true, Children that will not lie, now they are his peculiar Glory. The Lord may and doth in this case make his boast of, and glory in his people, *Job 1. 8.* If those who have Covenanted with God, deal falsely in his Covenant, and prove Liars unto him, now they stain the glory of God, reproach and pollute his Name; but if they maintain their integrity, continue faithful and upright, now they are a Name and a Praise to him; and for Israel his glory will the Lord place salvation in Zion, *Isa. 46. 13.* Upon all the glory there shall be a defence, *Isa. 4. 5.* With the upright the Lord will shew himself upright, *2 Sam. 22. 26.*

Reas. 3. Because this is the Aim, and shall be the final Issue of all the providential dispensations of God towards his people, to make them to be such children as will not lie. The Lord will never cease working, afflicting, sisting, purging, till he bring his people to be of this frame, although there be but a Remnant that will endure and hold out thereunto, *Zeph. 3. 13. Jer. 31. 23. Isa. 1. 25, 26, 27. Rev. 21. 27.*

The Application.

And here I shall consider that the words of the Text are spoken concerning a People, even the Body of a Nation; and so my endeavour shall be to apply the Truths delivered, unto this present Assembly standing before the Lord this day as the Body

New-Englands True Interest ;

of *this People* : Such in several respects is the Capacity of this solemn Congregation, and unto you *as such*, my desire is to speak in the Name of the Lord. For many a day and year, even from our first beginnings hath this word of the Lord been verified concerning us in this Wilderness ; *The Lord hath said of New-England, Surely they are my People, Children that will not lie, so hath he been our Saviour.* Upon this Basis have all the *Saviourly Undertakings* of the Lord been founded in the midst of us, and upon this bottom do we unto this day abide.

The solemn work of this day is *Foundation-work* ; not to lay a new Foundation, but to continue and strengthen, and beautifie, and build upon that which hath been-laid. Give me leave therefore, Honoured and Beloved, to awaken, and call upon you, in the Name of him who sends me, with reference unto those *Foundations* that are held forth to us in the Text, for if these should be *out of course*, what could the Righteous do ? If we should so frustrate and deceive the Lords Expectations, that his Covenant-interest in us, and the Workings of his Salvation be made to cease, then All were lost indeed ; Ruine upon Ruine, Destruction upon Destruction would come, until one stone were not left upon another.

Let the Uses be these four.

Use 1. Of Information ; to let *New-England* know what that gracious infinitely wise, holy and awful dispensation of divine Providence is, under which the Lord hath set us and continued us unto this day. We must look upon our selves as under a *solemn divine Probation* ; It hath been and it is a Probation-time, even to this whole People. Under great hopes, and singular eminent Expectations hath the Lord our God been trying of us, and is yet trying us in the wayes of his Salvation. There is this *one* voice of all his Providences towards us ; they call aloud unto us in this language of a Probation-time, *To day if this my people will hear my voice* ; To day if they will come up to the Lords Expectations, and answer his promises ; To day, that is, whilst it is a day of Salvation, whilst the Lord is yet so wonderfully preserving of us, displaying his Banner over us, holding underneath the Everlasting Arms, and making us to taste so much of his loving kindness and tender mercies every way. Divine Expectations
frustrated

frustrated will issue dreadfully, when the Lord shall make us know his *breach of promise*, Numb. 14. 34. This we must know, that the Lords promises, and expectations of great things, have singled out *New-England*, and all sorts and ranks of men amongst us, above any Nation or people in the world; and this hath been and is a time and season of eminent trial to us. If I should say that the very world, or common ordinary Professors expect great things from us at this day, there is a great deal of weight in it; If I say that the faithful precious suffering Saints of God in all other places, that have heard of the Lords Providences towards us, do expect and promise great things from us, this is farre more; But to mention the Lords own Expectations, this is most of all, these are certainly most solemn and awfull. Every Expectation of God is most just and righteous. *Are not my wayes equal?* saith God, *Ezek. 18. 29.* Yes, most equal, blessed God; Bountiful and Rich hast thou been in all thy free Bestowings; equal and just art thou in all thy greatest Expectations. If we do but run over the fore-mentioned grounds of divine Expectation, it will be sufficient to commit the judgement of this case even to *our selves*, as *Isa. 5. 3.*

As for special Relation unto God; whom hath the Lord more signally exalted then his people in this Wilderness? The Name and Interest of God, and Covenant-relation to him, it hath been written upon us in Capital Letters from the beginning. God had his *Creatures* in this Wilderness before we came, and his *Rational Creatures* too, a multitude of them; but as to *Sons and Children* that are Covenant-born unto God, Are not we the *first* in such a Relation? in this respect we are surely the Lords *first-born* in this Wilderness. Of the poor Natives before we came we may say as *Isa. 63. 19.* *They were not called by the Lords Name, he bear not Rule over them*: But we have been from the beginning, and we are the *Lords*.

As for Extraction and Descent, if we be considered as a *Posterity*, O what Parents and Predecessors may we the most of us look back unto, through whose Loins the Lord hath stretched forth the line of his Covenant, measuring of us out, and taking us in to be a peculiar Portion to himself?

As for Restipulations, and Engagements back again to God;

what awfull publick Transactions of this kinde have there been amongst us? Hath not the eye of the Lord beheld us laying *Covenant-Engagements* upon our selves? hath not his ear heard us solemnly *Avouching* him, and him alone, to be our God and Saviour? Hath not a great part of the world been a witness of these things, even of our explicite ownings of, and *Covenantings* with the Lord as our God, laying this as a foundation-stone in our Building; and of this we may say, It hath been a special Exasperation unto Adversaries and Ill-willers, that despised *New-England* hath laid claim to, and publicly avouched and challenged a special Interest in God above others.

As for our Advantages and Priviledges in a Covenant-state, here time and strength would fail to reckon up what we have enjoyed of this kinde; if any people in the world have been lifted up to heaven as to Advantages and Priviledges, we are the people. Name what you will under this Head, and we have had it. We have had *Moses* and *Aaron* to lead us; we have had Teachings and Instructions, *line upon line, and precept upon precept*; we have had Ordinances and Gospel-dispensations the choicest of them; we have had Peace and Plenty; we have had Afflictions and Chastisements in measure; we have had the Hearts, and Prayers, and Blessing of the Lords people every where; we have had the Eye and Hand of God, watching and working every way for our good; our Adversaries have had their Rebukes, we have had our Encouragements, and a wall of fire round about us. What could have been done more for us then hath been done?

And then in the last place, as to *New-Englands first wayes*; what glorious things might here be spoken, unto the praise of free-grace, and to justifie the Lords Expectations upon this ground? Surely God hath often spoke concerning His Churches here, as in *Ier. 2. 2. I remember the kindness of thy youth, &c.* O what were the open Professions of the Lords people that first entred this Wilderness? How did our fathers entertain the Gospel, and all the pure Institutions thereof, and those Liberties which they brought over? What was their Communion and Fellowship in the Administrations of the Kingdome of Jesus Christ? What was the pitch of their Brotherly love,

of their Zeal for God and his Wayes, and against wayes destructive of Truth and Holiness? What was their Humility, their Mortification, their Exemplariness? How much of Holiness to the Lord was written upon all their wayes and transactions? God sifted a whole Nation that he might send choice Grain over into this Wilderness.

Thus it hath been with us as to grounds of Divine Expectation: And therefore let us in the fear of God learn this great truth to day, and receive the instruction thereof sealed up unto all our souls; *That the great God hath taken up great Expectations of us, and made great Promises to himself concerning us, and this hath been, and is New-Englands day and season of Probation.*

Use 2. Of Examination and Conviction as to the Returns that we have made to God our Saviour; and that proof which he hath had of us, under such and so long a trial. How have we kept our selves from being *lying Children*? Here is solemn matter of Examination.

How the Lord hath carried it towards us cannot but be manifest, *Jer. 2. 31. O generation, see the word of the Lord, &c.* How we have carried it towards God, as it cannot lye in the dark, so it ought to abide under the most serious and practical reflections of all Ranks and degrees amongst us, and of every soul of us in special. Let it not be thought unseasonable to call upon you as a *Representative Assembly*, to look heedfully into the *glass* of the Truth delivered, that we may view the present face of things amongst us, even the face of this our present time and generation; not as *natural men*, to forget the same immediately, but as *spiritual men* to retain and judge of things, and as *gracious ones* to lament and intercede with the Lord. O what a sad *Metamorphosis* hath there of later years passed upon us in these Churches and Plantations? What a fruitful production of *Lies* hath there been in the midst of us? of Lies in Profession and Practice, in Doctrine and in Conversation? Certainly the *father of Lies* hath been bringing in his lies apace, & the lying spirit begins to have a large walk amongst us, venting and discovering it self even to the very face of the God of Truth, and engaging the Lord deeply in the quarrel of his Covenant.

+ What should this god Minister have said had he had his Children
meant in these days ~

Children there are many in this Wilderness ; A numerous Offspring hath the Lord your God given unto you : But what are we the Generation Risen and Rising up ? Are we *Children that will not lie* ? would to God it were so : Are we not rather a multitude of us, such as *keep not the Covenant of our God ? that refuse to walk in his wayes ? that flatter him with our mouthes, and lie unto him with our tongues ? because our heart is not right with him, nor are we stedfast in his Covenant,* Psal. 78. 10, 36, 37.

When ever the Lord proves a people, He is most critical in observing the discoveries that are made of them ; we can in no wise lye hid under Divine Probation. Hence saith the Lord *Jer. 2. 21. How art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine UNTO ME ?* that is, not unto me as an Omniscient God that know all things before they actually come to pass ; but unto me upon Probation and trial made. It is a solemn thought for us to think, and a solemn enquiry for us to make this day ; what are we *unto the Lord our God*, under all his trials of us ? And it is a solemn Conviction and Charge against us, to have it spoken, as it must be spoken in the Name of the Lord this day, *O New-England*, thy God did expect better things from thee and thy Children ; not Worldliness, and an insatiable desire after perishing things ; not Whoredomes and Fornications ; not Revellings and Drunkenness ; not Oaths & false Swearings ; not Exactions and Oppressions ; not Slandering and Backbitings ; not Rudeness and Indivility, a degeneracy from the good Manners of the Christian world ; not Formality and Profaneness, to loath Manna, to despise holy things, to grow Sermon-proof and Ordinance-proof ; not Contentions and Disorders ; not an Itching after new things and wayes ; not a rigid Pharisaical Spirit ; not a Contempt of Superiours, not Unthankfulness and disrespect to Instruments of choice Service ; not a growing weary of Government, and a drawing loose in the Yoke of God : Not these things, but better things, *O New-England*, hath thy God expected from thee. But what hath the Lord found ? Do not you who are our *Fathers in the Common-wealth* know ? or cannot those *Watchmen* of the Lord tell us, whom he hath set for a *Tower and a Fortres*, amongst us, to know and try the way of this people ?
Certainly

Certainly all these false and evil things, and that not by *secret search onely*, but openly and in the view of the world, hath the Lord found. Alas! how is *New-England* in danger this day to be lost even in *New-England*? to be buried in its own Ruines? How sadly may we lament it that *All are not Israel that are now of Israel*? How is the good grain diminished, and the chaff increased? The first generation have been ripened time after time, and the most of them gathered in as *shocks of corn in their season*; But we who rise up to tread out the footsteps of them that are gone before us, alas! what are we? It is a sad name to be styled *Children that are corrupters*; but are we not indeed many I. i. 4. of us *corrupted*, and which is far worse *Corrupters*? How is our *wine mixed with water*? what coolings and abatements are there to be charged upon us in the things that are good, and that have been our glory? We have abated in our esteem of Ordinances, in our hungry and thirsting after the rich provisions of the House of God; in our good stomachs to all that which is set before us upon the Table of the Gospel. We have abated in our Love and Zeal, in our wise, tender and faithful management of that great duty of mutual watchfulness and reproof.

There are many among us that have even *suffered many things in vain*; many that having *begun in the spirit*, do now walk as if they were to be *made perfect by the flesh*; many that are gone off from God in point of *dependance*, looking out to secure some other friends and hiding-places to themselves besides the Lord, against those changes of times that may come; many (as we may justly fear) that would but too soon and too easily in a day of trial entertain a *Lie* in the Worship of God, and return to the *onions and garlick of Egypt again*. How hath that evil work of Strife and Division sprung up almost every where amongst us? in which it is solemnly to be noted, that there is ever a *mixture of sin and punishment* going together: In this thing certainly we have failed the Lords Expectation; for he hath said, Surely in a Wilderness, under the eye of Observers, under such Leaders, and the free liberty of all those wayes of Order which Christ hath appointed to build up the Peace and Communion of his people, they will certainly be *of one heart and soul, keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and whereto they have attained*.

attained, walk by the same rule, and minde the same thing. Strict and impartial Examination would yield large matter of uncontrollable Conviction as to such things as these. Alas! what way of God with us is there, that hath not issued in the discovery of the *Lie* amongst us? The Answers of Prayer that we have so often, and so eminently received, these have discovered our *Lie*, for we have as often returned again to folly. Our Afflictions removed, these also have discovered the *Lie*, for with *Hezekiah* we have not returned according to the benefit done unto us. The Death and Removal of the Lords eminent Servants in one Rank and in another, this also hath manifested the *Lie* in many of us. Whilest they lived their Piety and Zeal, their Light and Life, their Counsels and Authority, their Examples and Awe kept us right, and drew us on in the good wayes of God, to profess and practise the best things; but now that they are dead and gone, Ah how doth the unsoundness, the rottenness and hypocrisie of too many amongst us make it self known, as it was with *Joash* after the death of *Jehojadah*. In a word, we that stand before the Lord this day, we have gone less with God then we did at first engage and bid him for all his kindness, and then we began at first to yield him, for all the Mercies, Privileges and Liberties of this Place. You that have tender and gracious hearts, suffer these things to affect and afflict them day by day. Verily if the load of them be not taken up and born by a considerable number amongst us in such a way, there is great fear lest it crack and sink us without remedy.

Use 3. Of Exhortation. As we would have the Lord to be and to continue to be our Saviour, so let us set our selves to answer the Lords Expectations. Let *New-England* answer the Lords Expectations of *New-England*, that the Lord *Jehovah* may be as he hath been *New-Englands* Saviour.

Men, Brethren and Fathers, We are all bound in a Covenant of Truth, to and with the God of Truth; There is an unworthy Messenger sent to you this day, to put you in minde of your Obligations, and solemnly to call upon you to be *True men* to God. *New-England men* should be *True men*; let not the contrary hereunto be our reproach either with God or man.

What the Lord expects from us hath been laid down before; I shall not enlarge upon those several Particulars again. That which

which I have in my aim, is, not any thing of *doubtful disputation*, not meerly Civils or Prudentials; but the sure and certain, the often acknowledged, and stated, common Interest of the people of God, and of you the Lords People in special; The Interest of Practical Piety and Holiness, so much reproached at this day; The Interest of unmixed, spiritual Gospel-worship, and of the sincere and open profession and owning of the truths and wayes of Christ, though persecuted and trampled on at this day in the world; The Interest of Unity and Peace in the wayes of Reformation, and of expecting and waiting for the issue of all those great and Astonishing Providences that are working every where; The Interest of these things, and of just and Righteous Liberties in order hereunto, is all that which I intend. The times are come, and hastning more and more, wherein faithfulness to God in all these things, will be the most glorious Crown that can be worn upon Earth; A Crown upon which it shall be graven, *Here is the Faith and Patience of the Saints*. This then is the word of the Lord unto his *New-England Churches and People* this day, *Let no man take this your Crown from you*; No Temptations, no Corruptions, no Insinuations, no Threatnings, no Fears, no Adversaries.

Rev. 13. 17.
& 14. 12.

If God had betruſted us here, but with a little; yet *he that is* Luk. 16. 10.
unfaithful in a little, would be so in much; and *he that is faithful in* Mat. 25. 21, 23.
a little, shall be made ruler over much: But the Lord hath betruſted us with much; with a very choice, and considerable part of the Interest of his Name and Glory; and that too in the view of the world, and upon manifold *Advantages* in our upholding, and cleaving to the same. God hath thrust down his people from their *Advantages* in other places; we have sinned against *ours*, but the Lord yet continues them, as the Liberty and Priviledge of this day doth testifie aloud to us. *New-England* hath yet its *Advantages* as well as its *Engagements* in this great matter of Owning the Cause of God, and standing their ground for God and Christ and the Gospel. And this we must know, that this is the time wherein *he that is not with Christ is against* Mat. 12. 30.
him; the reason is, because the Controversie comes now to be *stated* more openly, and to be *avouched* more professedly in the world. Antichrist is now displaying his Colours, setting up his Standard, and so is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Anointed King
and

and Priest and Prophet, the Fathers Heir of all things. The field is large whereinto the Forces on both sides are drawing; but the fight will be very close, and the quarrel in the issue finally decided; there can be no *neutralizing* therefore in this day. *He that gathereth not with Christ, scattereth abroad;* we must declare for whom we are, and choose our side, there will be no other Remedy. We indeed of these ends of the Earth have long since made our choice; we have given up our selves to the Lord Jesus as to our *Spiritual King and Law-giver*, to be his portion and inheritance: Now that which the Lord expects is, that we stick to this our choice, that we give not back a whit, so as to become *Liars* unto that God who unto us hath not been as *waters that fail.* *A poor man, saith Solomon, is better then a liar,* Prov. 19.22. to be called *Poor New-England*, this may seem to be a Reproach but in truth is not, for *he that mocketh the poor reproacheth his maker;* but to be called *False and lying New-England*, this shall be a blot and a reproach never to be wiped away.

Prov. 17.5.

As Satan said concerning *Job*, when God boasted as it were to him of his integrity, *Chap. 1.11 Put forth thine hand and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face;* and so again *Chap. 2. 5.* So it may be Satan and his Instruments may be tempting and saying concerning us; Let that people of so much Profession in the Wilderness be but thus or thus proved and tried, let but this or that happen to them, this or that Affrightment, this or that Allurement; Let but such and such be once removed by death or otherwayes, and then it shall be seen what they will come to; It will then appear how they will entertain the wayes of the world, and give up Gospel and Ordinances and Liberties as well as others, *selling their Birthright even for a mess of pottage.* But shall it ever be thus indeed? God forbid. We have been listed in the number of those followers of the Lamb who are *called, and chosen and faithful;* let us in the fear of God continue still to be of them. Special marks of favour the Lord hath been pleased from time to time to set upon those faithful undertakings of his Servants in this Wilderness, wherein keeping close to God in matters Civil and Ecclesiastical hath been the design in truth and in sincerity: now the Lord evermore keep us from bringing the marks of infamy upon our selves in any contrary way of walking. If the Lord hath named

Rev. 17.14.

us his *Witnesses*, and hath produced us as such unto the world; & we should be now sinfully silent, or withdraw, or alter our Testimony, as to any truth or way or work of his; O what a provocation would this be? It is a day wherein the Lord hath been Riding Circuit, and making proof of all Ranks and degrees of men, and he hath found them Liars; *Mean men have been vanity*, Psal. 62.9. *and men of high degree a lie*; they have professed for Reformation, and to be for the interest of Holiness and Gospel-worship, and for the just Liberties of the Lords people, but in an hour of temptation he hath found them *Liars*: Now what doth *New-England* say? *Will ye also go away*? Let such a question tend to establish your hearts the more; as it was the issue thereof upon the Disciples, *Joh. 6.67, 68, 69*. It will be a woful day indeed, when the Lord shall take up those words of witness against us, *Isa. 1. 2, 3*. It will be a doleful thing to be of a *broken credit* with God, and for the Lord to pronounce us *Bankrupts*. If we frustrate the *Lords* Expectations, he will cut off *ours*. The one contains in it the greatest aggravations of sin, and the other of punishment. We cannot make God miserable by the one, (*for of these stones he can raise up children unto Abraham*) but we shall be miserable with a witness in the execution of the other upon us. It hath been the glory and the glorying of the *Lords* people, that they have made no defection from him, no not in the saddest times, *Psal. 44. 17, 18, 19*. Let the same thing be our glory and our glorying.

In the further pressing of this Exhortation, let me a little more particularly direct my self, 1. *To the Remainders of the Ancient Stock amongst us*. 2. *To the present Generation*. 3. *To our Honoured Leaders and Rulers*.

First, *Unto those who are yet abiding with us of the first generation of the Lords faithful Servants*, those Plants of Renown wherewith God set his Garden here at the first. Let me speak a few words unto you *Fathers*, because you have known that which was from the beginning; you may take up the Apostle *John's* expressions, and say, *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Cause and Interest of God in this Wilderness*. You have had a long and large Experience of things; you have seen all the great works which the

Lord hath done for this people; you have been long rooted and satiated in the House of the Lord: As you ought to be, and are, so we esteem of you, and account you to be as a *Crown* and an *Honour* in the midst of us: Trials you have seen, and trials you may yet further see, but your *Triumph* is now at hand. You have by this time parted with the most and the choicest of your Contemporaries, your Companions in the foundations of the work of Christ here, And your eyes behold this day, that another Generation is risen up, and begin to stand thick upon the Stage; and that, even of them, there is one, to whose lot it falls to speak to you in the Name of the Lord this day. Now what is the sum of your desires, and would be the chief and top of your joyes, as to those you must shortly leave behinde you? Is it not that your *children after you may be found walking in the truth*, owning the Covenant of God, maintaining and upholding the same Interest of Holiness and Reformation wherein you have been engaged before us? *Then suffer the word of Exhortation* in a few words; And the Lord help you to consider the season; *Your season*, who have not long to be Examples, and as the *Salt* in the midst of us; and *our season*, who have not long to enjoy you. O believe much and pray much for your Successors in the Cause and work of God; shew forth and declare all the works of God unto your Children; Charge and adjure them to keep the Covenant of the Lord their God; forewarn them of such wayes and courses and persons, as you know, upon sufficient *experience*, to be destructive to the peace and beauty of our *Zion*. *As long as you are in this Tabernacle*, stir them up by putting them in remembrance, that they may be established in all those truths and practices, which to own and abide in hath been *New-Englands glory*, and must be its *preservatian and safety* in what-ever times are coming upon us. You know what Examples unto this purpose you have in *Moses* and *Joshua* and *David*; The Lord plant in you the same love and zeal and care for the Name of God and the welfare of your Posterity, *before you go hence and be seen no more*.

Secondly, *Unto those who are the Generation risen and rising up in the midst of us*. Suffer me, my Brethren and Companions, who am one of you, to direct this word of the Lord unto you also this day.

2 Joh. 4.
3 Joh. 4.

Exod. 10. 2.
Ps 78. 4. 5. 6. 7.

2 Pet. 1. 13.

Deut. 29. & c
Josh. 23 & 24
1 King 2.
1 Chion. 28.

It is we that begin now to be the *Body and Bulk* of this people every where, and to stand up in the room of those that are gone before us; How well we do or shall fill the same, the Searcher of all hearts he knows. This is sure, that the work of God, and his Name, and his Expectations of great things, do this day descend upon us; even of us hath the Lord also spoken it, *Surely These are my people too, children that will not lie; for his Covenant is commanded unto many Generations.* It is high time then for us to be thoroughly awakened; It is high time for us to stand up, solemnly to receive the charge, and blessing of the Lord our God, and of his faithful Servants that are departing from us. It is high time for us to prepare the shoulder in good earnest, and to give our necks to the yoke of God, that we may not be a *fruitless, a faithless, a perverse Generation.* It is true indeed that there are through grace some *first Ripe Grapes* to be found amongst us, (though of such the Lord hath been snatching away some, (as of late) *clusters in which the new Wine was found,* and much of the blessing of our Vine contained) but why should we frustrate the Lord of that *full vintage* which he justly expects from our Generation. My Brethren, we are the Seed of such as are and have been the *friends of God*; we are the *Children of the Covenant* and of the *Kingdom*; O that all that see us might acknowledge, that indeed we are the seed which the Lord hath blessed. O that we might be as that seed spoken of and promised *Isa. 44. 3, 4, 5.* upon which the Lord will pour his Spirit, and they shall spring up among the grass, as willows by the water-courses. One shall say, *I am the Lords,* and another shall call himself by the name of *Jacob,* and another shall subscribe with his hand to the Lord, and surname himself by the name of *Israel.* O inexcusable we if it be not thus! Were our fathers as a *noble vine*, and shall we be as the degenerate plant of a *strange vine*? shall our vine be of the vine of *Sodom*, and of the fields of *Gomorrhah*? were they as the best and choicest wine cheering God, and man, and shall we be as the *sowrest vinegar*? shall our wine be as the *poison of dragons*? Shall all those precious things of God in this Wilderness, which were so savoury and sweet unto our fathers, and for the enjoyment of which, they made their bargain with God, and gave up their *All* elsewhere, shall these be unto us their Children, as *sapless, savourless, husky things* so quickly? shall we so soon say of them, *What*

Psal. 105. 8.

Mar. 17. 17.

Deut. 32. 5, 20.

Isa. 65. 8.

Isa. 61. 9.

Deut. 32. 32, 33

Psal. 106. 13.

Exod 32. 8.

Judg 2. 17.

good shall this Birthright do us? Shall the world, and lusts and sins, and vain liberties and new notions be more sweet unto us and thirsted after; then Christ and Word and Ordinances, then strict and godly Government, then the wings of Gods Covenant, then the labour and service of the House of God? God forbid. When God first began to keep House in this Wilderness, it was furnished with the choicest Household-stuff; He had much Plate and Jewels, and other such precious things, Vessels of Gold and of Silver; shall we now rise up to fill his House with *meer Lumber*, worthless cumbersome sorry stuff, that will by no one be look'd after in a day of burning, nor by any one lamented though consumed in the fire? Shall not we bid as much as any in the world for an Interest in the Lord God of our fathers? for such an Interest in him as our fathers had in God? Shall not this be more to us then this whole Wilderness, yea then the whole World can give to us beside? for the Lords sake let us not be of any other frame. Let not the words of this Exhortation rise up as a Testimony against any of you. And that they may not, but that we may be found *Children that will not lie*, there are these Directions, omitting sundry others that might have been given.

1. Make conscience, not onely of *being rightly informed* in that cause of God which we are here wrapt up in, and in adhering whereunto the Lord hath hitherto preserved and blessed his Churches and people, but also of *getting a sight and view of the divine beauty and glory thereof*. There is nothing short of *true and real glory*, divine spiritual glory, that can chain fast our Souls to the Cause of God, so as to own and cleave to it in sincerity at this day. When God carried out *Abraham* into another Land, he appeared to him as *a God of glory*, Acts 7. 2. so did God appear unto our fathers in the way wherein he led them hither, and in the Cause for which: Thus must he appear to us also, if ever we abide stedfast with him in that Cause. It is therefore a most sweet Petition that the Church makes *Psal. 90. 16, 17. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy Glory unto their children.* *Babylon* paints her face anew at this day; *Anti-christ* hath varnished his Interest, so that there are many who are allured and taken with the beauty of that Harlot; O let us beg of God that we may behold the beauty and the glory of His

His Cause & Interest amongst us: And truly as to this Cause and Interest of God, there can be *no other foundations laid then those which have been laid.* N-Englands true & main Interest, the Cause of *Christ* in his Churches here, It is a fixed unalterable thing: It is not now to be found out by any *New Light*. But alas, how many of us grow up and never get one real view of the glory of it? of whom that complaint may be taken up *Deut. 29. 4.* *We have not unto this day had an heart to perceive, or eyes to see, or ears to hear, no not unto this day.* Let us take heed of enquiring of or listning, in this matter, unto the determinations and glosses of such as have had no standing in the wayes of God here, but have been grafted in upon *By-Accounts*, or move in the *Excentrick Orb* of some Private Interest distinct from that of the whole. And let us also lay down this as a Rule; *That whatsoever it is that hath been unanimously Rejected and Condemned in its claims by the Acknowledged Eminentest Reformers in each Age, since the Apostacy of Antichrist prevailed, This can never in these our dayes justify its Title to that Cause of Christ that is to be maintained and contended for, Jer. 6. 16.*

2. Let us stand feelingly under the weight of all those Engagements that lye upon us to be an upright Generation unto God. The Lord hath laid all manner of Engagements upon us; *By his Covenant*, into the bond whereof we are brought; *By all his Messengers and Servants* whom he hath sent, rising up early and sending them; *By his Providences* from the beginning; *Ours* are All the Salvations, the Experiences, the Miracles of Mercy and of Preservation that have been bestowed upon this people and the Cause of God here at any time, yea though we were not then born, *Hos. 12. 4, 5.* *And we have laid Engagements upon our selves*; we have said that we would be the Lords: and O what a God is it that we have engaged our selves so solemnly unto? *A God All-sufficient.* Surely our Fathers have not inherited lies or vanity, and things wherein there is no profit, in inheriting that God for their portion unto whom we as their Children have Covenanted our selves.

3. Take heed of thinking it an *ease matter* to serve the Lord God of our Fathers, and to answer his Expectations of us. To have such a *vain thought lodging in us*, would be to us a foundation of Ruine. The God of *New-England*, the God of pure Or-

Exod. 23. 21.

dinances and Churches and Worship is a *Consuming fire*. The Angel of the Lords Presence with us *will not pardon our iniquities*. *Joshua* puts the Rising generation in minde of this solemn truth, *Josh. 24. 19, 20*. Those that have gone before us in the Cause of God here, who and what were they? Certainly choice and pick'd ones, whom he eminently prepared and trained up and qualified for this Service; They were *Worthies*, men of singular Accomplishments, and of long and great Experience; yet did they walk with fear and trembling before the Lord in the sense of their own nothingness and insufficiency for the Work here to be done. But we, poor we, alas what are we! we want many seasonings which our Fathers had, we are poor raw things; we want those eminent Conversions, those Schools of Experience, those Opportunities and Advantages of gaining Knowledge, &c. which they had.

4. Look after the *Root of the matter* in your Souls. There are many empty outside Custom born Christians now adayes: A day of temptation will discover what such as these will come to, when they are catcht in Satans snares, and become the Reproach of the Gospel and of a good Cause. O let us get *good sound Principles*, for want whereof the Profession of so many hath run it self out of breath, and broke its neck in these dayes. It hath been said that *a loose Protestant is fit to become a strict Papist*. A formal ungrounded Professor, he will be fit for Satans turn in these dayes. O get to be sincere in your Principles, that your Repentance may be *thorow Repentance*, your Humiliation deep, your Faith of the *operation of God*, your Love to God and his wayes and people, a fruit of *Gods love in Christ* unto your souls; It must be *such a generation that must save New-Englands All*. Don't boast it of being *Abrahams Children*; do not challenge, & lay claim to the distinguishing Priviledges of the House of God in the pride and unhumbleness of your hearts. Take heed of moving on in the wayes of God upon the strength of bare convictions and external motives only, whilest indeed such wayes are most unsuitable unto your unrenewed frame within, and to your spirits, as yet unsubdued to the yoke of Christ, by any Gospel power making of them *willing* in the day thereof. If you have a *name* only to live, you will in the issue fall down among the *slain of the Lord*, I mean slain under *spiritual Judgements*,

Matth. 3. 9.

ments, who shall be many in these dayes wherein we live.

5. Take heed of and watch against all the *various steps, degrees, methods* whereby men come to forsake and turn off from the Lord and his wayes. 1. Men use the Ordinance of God *slightly and carelessly*, 2 King. 10. 31. they dwell in Zion, but are strangers to the *well-springs* that are there. Under the fulness of Ordinances they look not after that which their souls may eat & drink, and be spiritually *satiated* with. Church-watch, fellowship, discipline does them no real inward good. 2. Now men grow secretly *weary* of all these things, as of a garment that warms not, and bread that strengthens not; they are not tyed by the *heart-strings* to pure Ordinances and Worship, and to a godly Government. 3. Now men begin to *question the ground and warrant of things*. 4. Now they hearken after *Objections*, and what may be *cavill'd against* the Wayes and Institutions of God. 5. Now they are *imposed upon by deceitful workers*; they greedily listen unto what may be said for the wayes and institutions, courses and customes of men. 6. Now they *take offence* at persons and things, and suffer their spirits to be imbittered. 7. Now being *given up by God*, they *fall quite off*; Men gather them, they are joyned in with the Instruments of Satan, and turn *Underminers* at least, if not open *Persecutors*. O take heed and watch against all these things. Enquire after all the *first warpings* of your hearts and spirits; be not ignorant of *Satans devices*. 2 Cor. 2. 11.

6. Maintain a Reverend and High *Esteem* of godly Leaders, Civil and Spiritual Guides, and be *subject* to them in the Lord. Account regular subjection to be an *excellent* thing; and that a pliability and yeldableness in this, carries an *excellency* of spirit along with it. There is not only excellent *Humility*, but excellent *Wisdom* also in such a course. The *Order* of God both in Civils and Ecclesiasticals, duely Acknowledged, Reverenced, submitted unto in the Lord, will bring so great a blessing with it of peace, gracious guidance, a happy issue in difficult cases, and settlement, as too too often we have too much self and carnal wisdom and too little faith to believe.

7. Plead and improve the Lords *Covenant with you*, and in special your *Baptism*, the first Seal of that Covenant, that you may be established and made faithful with the Lord therein. If we forget and neglect the Lord in that wherein he begins with

us, and first visibly takes hold of us, no wonder if we make no progress, but sit loose from God all our dayes.

These are the *Directions* that I would leave with you in the name and fear of the great God to be thought of and put in practice. There is a *Consideration* or two whereby I would yet further back this Branch of the Exhortation unto you of the *Present Generation*, that are now listning unto this solemn word of God, and so I shall pass on with as much speed as may be in that which remains.

1. The present work of God in these Churches *it must stand or fall in our hands* ; for it is now devolved upon us of the *present Generation*. It is true indeed God can cut us off and graft in others ; He can fill his House though we were shut all of us out of doors ; He can uphold his own name and glory though we were swept to the dunghill : But that *individual work* which hath been begun and hitherto carried on in this place, it must stand and fall with us. Now shall the enemy *blaspheme* because of us ? shall Satan triumph as a *conquerour* in us ?

2. *What will become of us*, if we fail the Lord of his Expectations ? O what good shall we lose ? what evil shall we bring upon our selves ? *Whither shall we cause our shame to go* ? will God care for a degenerate Race ? when the *overflowing scourge shall pass*, will there be any *Sanctuary* for us with the God of Truth ? What did it profit the Israelites in the Wilderness, that they had all things according to the Pattern, but they themselves were a rebellious and hard hearted generation ? if we be transgressors we shall utterly perish ; Enemies and evils of all sorts shall have a bargain of us, *Deut. 32. 30. Except their Rock had sold them. Judg. 2. 14.*

3. It is not long before the Lord will *finish his great works* in the world : *Antichrist shall be destroyed, Israel shall be saved ; Zion shall be redeemed with judgement, and her converts with righteousness* ; though the Lord bear long with his Elect, yet he will *avenge them speedily*. That he *bears long*, hath been already fulfilled ; what remains therefore to be accomplished, but only that now he *avenge them speedily* ? shall we take *this season* then wherein to fail the Lord ? shall we be among the *last Apostates*, for whom the sorest vengeance is laid up in store ? *Yet a little while and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.* Blessed

are

Mat. 1. 27.

Luke 18. 7, 8.

are they that wait for, and can abide the day of his coming. Shall we lose our share in those times of Refreshment which are so near to come?

4. Consider and remember alwayes, that the Books that shall be opened at the last day will contain Genealogies in them. There shall then be brought forth a Register of the Genealogies of New-Englands sons and daughters. How shall we many of us hold up our faces then, when there shall be a solemn rehearſal of our descent as well as of our degeneracies? To have it published whose Child thou art will be cutting unto thy soul, as well as to have the Crimes reckoned up that thou art guilty of.

Thirdly, In the third and last place This Exhortation is directed unto you who are in place of Government respectively, and that may be this day our Established Leaders and Rulers. Honoured and much Esteemed; The Lord hath measured out an Inheritance for a precious Remnant of his people in this Wilderness; we may with all humility acknowledge that we are his flock and the sheep of his pasture; And here there is a solemn Trust that is invested in You who are Rulers; committed unto you by God and by men; your Mothers Children, though not in anger, do make you the Keepers of the Vineyard: so that Gods Expectations and his Peoples are upon you in a special manner. Do You also answer these Expectations, that as in your publick capacities you are more peculiarly the Children of Pſal. 82. 6. the Most High; so you may be also Children that will not lie. If you be true to God, to his Truths, to your Trust, according to your Abilities and Opportunities of doing for God, his Interest and People; then know, that whatever may for a time become of that Cause and those precious Concernments, which are upon your hearts to save, though with your lives, if called thereunto; yet you your selves shall be sure to enjoy the Salvation of God. Be you fixed therefore in your Orb, and not as those Stars that now adayes fall from Heaven; that you may continue to be in the midst of us, as the light of the morning, a 2 Sam 23. 4. morning without clouds, and as the clear shining after rain. The Foundations of your Government have been Righteousness; of this there is a Record on High; and the Lord hath added Peace hitherto. Now your Power and Authority doth lye professedly, and by fundamental Constitution, in a direct subserviency

Hof. 11. 12.

Pfal 7. 14.

Job 15 35.

Pfal. 72. 3.

Pfal 82. 6.

serviency to the Interest Power and Kingdome of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the welfare of his Saints. This you acknowledge and own, and it is your glory; And herein is required your Fidelity and Constancy, that you may continue *Ruling with God, and faithful with his Saints*. This is that which God expects and promiseth to himself, that you Rule and Govern this People for him; And that you lay out your selves, in all regular wayes, to the utmost, to preserve us from *Apostacy*, and from being *lying Children*, or false with the Lord in his Covenant. You who are our *Judah*, our Ruling Tribe, you are the *Bow*, This People are as the *Arrows* (that I may allude to what we finde *Zech. 9. 13.*) if you be but Bent right, and have Strength and Steadiness, we shall hope, through mercy, to be shot directly forward, and in some good measure to reach the Mark aimed at. We know that your care and sollicitude is, lest the Ruine of anything that is of God should be under your hand; And indeed the Lord hath set you for the defence of all that which is His in this remote corner of Christs Inheritance: You are the *Keepers of our Walls*; and therefore for *Zions* sake, even for our own sakes, we do in the Name of the Lord solemnly wish you this day, and at all times, *Prosperity*; we wish you *Wisdom*, *Spirit*, *Fidelity*; we wish you an *Healthful Countenance* and *Constitution of Affairs*; we wish you the *Counsels of Truth and Peace*. There be many at this day, *The Brood of Antichrist*, that are *Travailing with Mischief*, and the hope of some of them is to have a good *Lying-in* of it, even here amongst us; but they shall All of them *bring forth a Lie*: But be you Exhorted to *travail* with the designs and work of God, plotting how to Exalt the Kingdome of our Lord Jesus, the Righteousness Holiness and Peace thereof more and more, that so you may be as the *Mountains that bring forth peace*, and the *Hills that bring forth Righteousness unto the Lords people*. You know how your *Style* runs in the language of the Holy Ghost, you are called *Gods*, and we do therefore account you *Worshipfull*; Now to be a *God* (as one in this case speaks) is to be above all Fears, all Hopes, all Temptations; to be immutable, and not to appear so much as in the shadow of a change. Thus it must be with you in your measure. And therefore as you are called *Gods*, minde this your

your *Ghry*. But yet though you be Gods, we must not think to finde you without Infirmities; your *Drity* is such, that a multitude of Infirmities is compatible therewith; onely there may be *Infirmities* where there is not the *Lie*. Weakness and Falleness are vastly different; ask this grace, that the latter may never be charged upon you; And so the Lord, in *remem- bring you for good*, according to all that you have done for this people, and for his Name, shall spare you also, according to the multitude of his mercies.

I cannot insist here upon all those particulars wherein the Expectations of God and of his people are placed upon you; your first wayes have engaged you deeply. *Magistrates and Rulers* they are not only *Foundation-stones*, and so *Supporters* of the Common wealch; but they must be also *Corner-stones* Zech. 10.4. in the Foundation, to *Couple and Unite*; They must be *Healers*. Isa 3.7. And the good Lord guide you, and prosper you as to this part of your work, that such a mercy, *Uniting and Healing* mercy, may be called after your name. When the unfeigned friends and sincere promoters of Reformation, on the one side, and those that hate Reformation, on the other side, make up the two Parties; now (as is observed) the fire of Contention is *natural*; *Homogeneous things* are congregated, and *Heterogeneous* are segregated: But when both the Sides do grow up from the former sort, and they themselves become divided, the fire of this Contention, because of the quite contrary effect, is *unnatural*. The Lord pour out the Blood of Christ upon the last spark of this fire, for its utter extinguishing.

Many Knots and Intricacies there may be, and Clouds of darkness upon some matters in disquisition, which none but a gracious God can dissolve; in these things the Lords people are to exercise mutual forbearance. *Circumstantial Differences* ought not to breed *Substantial Divisions*; that would be a *Monstrous and Gigantine birth*. It is wrong done to the Christian name so much as to *question*, Whether that diversity of Apprehension in lesser and dubious matters amongst the Lords people ought to be born withall, which can and doth suffer a Regulation in order to the Unity and Peace of the whole. But yet the true Christian Gospel-Liberty, was never unto this day a Womb big with *Licentiousness*. And here there is one Posi-

tion, that me-thinks can never be denied by any that have but the common Principles of Reason intire; viz. That no Perswasion or Practise, can ever in the Conscience of the contrary-minded, have a good right to publick Liberty and Countenance, which being thorowly attended to, doth indeed tend to the undermining, and so in the issue to the overthrow of the state of these Churches, in that wherein it is of God, and hath been largely and plentifully owned by him. And of this case and the application thereof, those who are in Authority may and ought to judge. And further, Who can therefore think it much, if such Opinions as are not onely in themselves, but even in the mindes of those that hold them, un-Churching to so many precious Societies of Christ, I mean as to their visible Church-state, be very harsh and unpleasant, and the uncontrolled scope of them much more distastful. Certainly a weaker Body cannot, ought not to do that, or suffer that upon it self, or in it self, upon the account of Charity to another, which a stronger Body may, and in some cases may be bound to do or suffer. All regular Charity (*ceteris paribus*) begins first at home. There are the Peculiar Constitutions, and different Capacities of places to be considered, according as God in his infinite Wisdome doth order and suffer matters to be circumstanced; Men truly Conscientious ought to make Conscience here, what they venture upon, or what they demand and ask of Authority. There is but one thing more that in these matters I would seriously minde you of, and that is a piece of seasonable and sound Advice which some-where I meet with, unto this purpose for the substance, That where differences of Apprehension and Opinion do happen amongst godly Reformers in their Enquiries after the Will and Way of God; It be thorowly laboured that such Points of Difference be accurately stated, and unto the utmost that may be possible narrowed, and some Rules of Practise for the preservation of Order and Peace mutually fixed, and a *Probatum est* set upon the Experience of them, during the life time of those who have been first in such matters of Debate and Controversie; for otherwise if this should be neglected, and they being dead and gone others spring up after them to inherit a diversity of Names from them, the business of Reconciliation and Composure would be in a farre more difficult posture, and rather go backward then forward,

as sad Experience in the Christian world hath already Testified.

But I may not hold you longer upon these things. In a word, do all the Lords work in your publick Capacities faithfully and vigorously. Execute Justice impartially; Be a Terror to evil doers; Encourage all them that are faithful; Put new life into all publick Work that languisheth; Look to Out-scattered unformed places in your Jurisdiction, and that enjoy not settled publick Worship and Teaching. And as the sum of all, *Fall not off from any thing upon any pretence whatsoever, which adhering unto, God hath hitherto saved you and this People;* for this would be to Lie unto God, yea to make him a Liar in the voice and testimony of all his former Providences.

I have but a few words of Direction in all plainness to leave with You also, Honoured and much Esteemed, and so shall finish this Use.

1. Wait upon God in your Places for discovery of *Light and Truth*, that you may understand the way of this people, Prov. 14. 3. and the Lords way with us, and in the world too at this day; that so your *Wisdom and Knowledge may be the stability of our times.* God will not be unwilling to communicate Light to you in his own way, Eccles. 8. 5. Every lesser Star (as one speaketh) hath light enough for it self; but no less then a Sun can give light to the World. Rulers had need to be full of light. Let your eye upon all occasions be upward unto the Father of *Heavens* Lights; and so shall his eye be fix'd upon yours, and this eye of *Heaven* shall guide you. *Psal. 34. 5. & 32. 8.*

2. Secure your hearts and spirits as to *sincerity* before the Lord, and for that end seek the honour that cometh from God *only.* Integrity and uprightness shall preserve and guide you. An unbyassed Magistracy shall never want Assistance. Watch against private narrow Self-ends; that if in an hour of trial and temptation, some proffer of a private good, or to save your own particular state, should be strongly managed by Satan, to draw you off from the Publick and Common Interest, yet you may abide resolved and constant thereunto. It was the Resolution of an Heathen, *Ne Immortalitatem quidem contra Rempublicam acciperem.* Moses his Refusal and the Apostle Paul's wish are known to you. Say you should do much of Gods work, but not

not with a sincere aim at *God's ends*, this would be to *Lie* unto him. Thus *Jesus* was a *Lie* in all he did. Let there be no variation of the Compass with you as to sincere and upright aims and ends. God will make large allowance to weaknesses, but then there must be sincerity.

3. Study *Unity* among your selves, and in your own Counsels, that our first wheels may move with the sweetness and undisturbedness of a *Cœlestial* divine Harmony.

Eph. 5. 25.
1 Joh. 3. 16.

4. Drink deep of the *love of God* in Christ, who shed his Blood to save his Church, that *your love* to the Wayes and Ordinances and Churches and People of God, may have its rise and nourishment from this fountain. It is such a love alone that will *constrain* you, and remain *unquench'd* though in the midst of many waters.

5. Arm your selves with *Courage*; if you will be good Magistrates, you must be such as *dare* to act your Consciences; and Arm your selves also with *Patience* (I will joyn them both together) for the *burthen* of the people must be *born*. Get from under the influence of carnal fears, these will make you to lie, *Isa. 57. 11*. You have been taught by Experience to expect Oppositions, Trials, Exacerbations; *wickedness will proceed from the wicked*; there will be a tumultuating of the passions and lusts of men, yea and of the corruptions of good men too, under the strict exercise of Government, when the Reins of Authority are held straight. Without a good measure of holy Patience and Courage you will not hold out. You must have so much Courage as to *seek out that labour which belongs to your Office and Honour*; so much Courage that it may not be *dreadful to you, to be so hemm'd in with duty on every side as to see no way of Retreat*.

Isa. 7. 9.

6. Look upon *Faith* to be the way to *Fidelity*; if you will not believe you shall not be established. Faith undertakes all upon the engagement of God. Faith bottoms the Soul upon the promise, and builds it up in a way of supplications. Know it, that if you will be found faithful with God at this day in the work of Rulers, you must be neither *Lower* nor *Middle*, but *Upper-Region* men, and there is nothing but Faith, and the constant lively exercise thereof that can carry you *so high*. Such as live upon *future contingents*, they will be miserably *uncertain*, up and down,
now

now here and now there, but *Faith*, the eye and design, the hope and the heart of *Faith*, fix wholly upon things that are *unchangeable*. Secure your hearts therefore in a single dependance upon, and sole trust in God; *Commit your way to the Lord* at all times, and do not consume away in your own fears and cares and contrivances.

7. When you have behaved your selves with the greatest *sincerity* and *integrity* in your places, and have been able to do most for God, still look Gen. 6. 8. 9. for your *Acceptance* with God, and your *Reward* from him as of *Free-grace* Neh. 13. 22. only. This is to be upright in the upshot of all.

Finally, have you not often received encouragements from the promises? hath not the Lord been present with you in difficulties? have you not been oft refreshed with the testimony of a good Conscience, that in *simplicity* and *godly sincerity* you have managed what hath been in your hand? 2 Cor. i. 12. have you not been a Government enquiring after the mind and will of God, given to prayer, and to advise with the Word of God and the faithful dispensers of the same? Now then go on, even this year also, in *this your* might, *Being and Doing All* for God; *And He that is indeed the great Shepherd and Stone of Israel*, shall be in the midst of you, *The mighty Counsellor, The Prince of Peace, upon whose shoulder the Government is and shall be.*

Use 4. Of *Encouragement* and *Affurance* to all the Lords people here in this Wilderness. Let us but prove *Children that will not lie*, and we shall not want *Salvation*. If we lie not, the *vision* shall not lie. Nothing but our own Lie can shut us out from the *Salvation* of God. Our great work lies in this, to keep from being lying children; we may now confidently leave the work of saving us with God. Yea our *Enemies* in this way shall be found Deut. 33. 29. *Liars unto us*; *Achitophel* shall die in Child-bed, not being able to give life and birth to his mischievous Conceptions. *Balaam* may set up his *Altars*, and offer his *Sacrifices*, and seek *Incantments* once and again, but without success, when the Lord beholdeth not this iniquity in *Jacob*, nor sees this *perverse-ness* in *Israel*. If the Lord preserve unto us a faithful People, a faithful Ministry, a faithful Magistracy, He will then *Appoint Salvation* for *Walls* and *Bulwarks* to us. It is *New-Englands Lie* that must open the door unto *New-Englands Ruine*, which the Lord for ever preserve us from, and set a double *Lock* of faithfulness upon all our Souls, that we may be both faithful to God, and also faithful with his Saints. I will but briefly note unto you a few particulars out of *Psal* 125. and so shut up all.

First, We have a time and season of fore trial and exercise supposed, by reason of the budding and blossoming of the *Rod of wicked men*, and its lying upon the *Lot of the Righteous* for a time, ver. 3.

Secondly, We have the different and contrary behaviour of persons under such an hour of temptation. Some are *Children that will not lie*; they are good in such evil times, they are upright in their hearts, v. 4. and they trust in God, v. 1. Others they prove *Liars*, they turn aside into crooked wayes, they shrink and prevaricare with God, and warp off from the straightness of the Rule, and the uprightness of the Cause of God, v. 5.

Thirdly, We have the different issue which the Lord makes with these different persons. 1. Those that turn aside into crooked wayes, and so prove *Liars* to God, He leads them forth with the workers of iniquity; they are not

Heb. 10. 38.

Prov. 14. 14.

Psal. 14.

men that do at the first openly pass over into the Tents of wickedness, but in such a day of trial, they are unfound with God, and have their By-ways of ~~Gasol~~ latitude and compliance, playing fast and loose with a good Cause, and corrupt byssles and fair pretences; such as these, whoever they be, even the best of them, the Lord shall make them to go with workers of iniquity. (1) Workers of iniquity are of a vile low esteem both with God and his Saints, so these turners aside shall be cast out of the heart & esteem of Christ and of his Saints, if ever they had any repute they shall lose it. (2) workers of iniquity proceed on and grow worse and worse; 2 Tim. 3. 13. so it is the curse of God upon crooked wayes that they are ever headlong down-bill wayes. Men think they will go but thus far or so far in treacherous false wayes, and remain hid all the while under some fair cloak, but they shall proceed untill they be known, Prov. 10. 4. (3) workers of iniquity are ever cut short of their designs, Psal. 21. 11. so it shall be with these. (4) workers of iniquity stumble in, and dash themselves against all the Righteous wayes of God; and so shall these marpers, Hab. 14. 9. (5) workers of iniquity are snared in their own way, so shall these that so turn aside, they shall be intangled and hang in the bushes and thickers of their own contrivances, Psal. 9. 10. & 7. 14, 15, 16. (6) workers of iniquity shall be turned into Hell, and so shall those that choose crooked wayes, Prov. 1. 32. The turning away of the simple shall slay them. There are but two bundles: at the last day, that great Harvest day; the bundle of life, and of the workers of iniquity: David prays that he may not be found in this bundle, Psal. 26. 9. but into this shall all that turn aside be gathered; They shall go with their Companions in the issue; whatever they would be thought to be here, yet they shall inherit Hell and Damnation at the last under this very Title of workers of iniquity, Mat. 7. 23. But 2. with the Upright and such as continue Trusting in God in the hour of Temptation, the Lord deals after another manner; unto these Children that will not lie he becomes a Saviour. (1) They shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be moved, but abideth for ever. Ungodly ones like chaff are blown away, but Mount Zion Abideth for ever, ver. 11. (2) The Lord will be round about them for ever, ver. 2. they need not fear then the siege, the encamping, the assaults of enemies though they be Round about; the Lord is both the Center and Circumference too, in the safety and security of his upright ones; for as here he is said to be round about them, so Psal. 144. 5. He is said to be in the midst of them also. (3) The Lord will do them good, ver. 4. The goodness of the Lord is a Cordial sufficient against all fainting, Psal. 27. 23. there is all Salvation contained in it, Zech. 9. 16, 17. (4) The Lord will give them Peace, ver. last. Peace shall be upon Israel, i.e. upon Israel walking uprightly, According to Rule, and not crookedly, Gal. 6. 16. These are the true and faithful sayings of God. They are not ought to be for our encouragement, that we through patient continuance in well-doing, and the comfort of such Scriptures might have hope. Let come what will come, if we Answer what the Lord hath said of us, That Surely we are his People, Children that will not lie; He will then most Assuredly and most Seasonably Become New-Englands Saviour. Isa. 54. 17. 8. & 26. 1, 2.

F. I. N. I. S.

Errata. p. 5. l. 3. for persons read reasons. p. 31. l. 4. read Ordinances. The rest are literal.

